

Masthead Logo

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Answer Man

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Four Poems · *Lawrence Arancio*

VERONICAS

After fifteen minutes I realized
she wasn't going to get her lipstick right.
The blinding compact mirror
the pile of wounded napkins
the uncontrollable hose of red
held like an ice cream cone
stabbing the battered face.
Catching her breath, one by one
she flattened out the napkins
and read each wrinkled Rorschach
like the steaming viscera of a sacred bull.

ANSWER MAN

There was a shopping cart
near a fruit stand and
I threw my clothes over it
thinking no one respects
the neighborhood anymore.
I wheeled the cart on the curb
and ran into Olga
who was complaining
she was out at the cemetery
in Queens and just anyone
could dig up anyone's remains
it was the law now
so it was hard to find your own
(although the law was made
to help you find your own)
and the sun was the yellow
of youth and perpetual summer.